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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM The Fred Fiske Show

STATION WAMU-FM
NPR Network

DATE December 7, 1983 8:00 P.M. CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT Dale Van Atta Interview

FRED FISKE: ...an interesting article in the current issue of The Washingtonian, "God and Man at the CIA."

And we're very pleased to have you back at our microphones, Dale.

DALE VAN ATTA: Thank you, Fred. It's good to be back.

FISKE: The question that you explore in this piece is how the CIA reconciles lying or murder or otherwise moral deviations from accepted practice with religion, and apparently successfully.

What got you interested in this? What raised the question in your mind?

VAN ATTA: Well, I've been covering the CIA for several years, Fred. And it was raised in my mind because I am, myself, religious; and it happened that I knew several people who were in the agency who were of the same religion. And it started me thinking about how they could deal with the kinds of things that were appropriate at the CIA or were done at the CIA years ago. And the more I pursued it, the more people that I asked, it turned out over the last two or three years that I asked every CIA person I ever came in contact with. I would always discuss one story and then just say, you know, "How do you deal with the ethical questions?" So it slowly developed and I built anecdotes and other things, and finally wrote the article.

FISKE: Had it occurred to these otherwise religious people -- I understand from your article, and I would have suspected it in any case, that the large majority of people who